

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta

COMMUNITY FIREGUARD PROGRAM (CFP)

REFERENCE: FRIAA-CFP AUGUST 2024

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Issue Date:	August 9, 2024
Intake #1 Closing Date/Time:	September 13, 2024 – 4:00 pm
Information Session:	August 20, 2024 - 10:00 am
Submission Portal:	https://friaa.ab.ca/program-submissions/
Telephone:	780-429-5873
Inquiry Email:	admin@friaa.ab.ca
Website Information:	www.friaa.ab.ca

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (“**FRIAA**”) was established in 1997 to promote and initiate projects that enhance Alberta’s Forest resources. In keeping with this primary purpose, FRIAA entered into a Grant Agreement with the Government of Alberta (“**GOA**”) to deliver the Community Fireguard Program (the “**CFP**”).
- 1.2 The purpose of the CFP is to support the Provincial FireSmart Program initiative by funding the construction of community fireguards that provide for enhanced public safety and improved protection of at-risk communities.
- 1.3 FRIAA is inviting prospective applicants to submit Proposals under the CFP for the first Phase 2: Construction proposal intake. Multiple intakes are expected to be announced, as funding is available. The following information outlines the intent of this Request for Proposals (“**RFP**”) process and provides instructions to prospective applicants who wish to submit a Proposal under this RFP.
- 1.4 Under the CFP, the following activities (“**Eligible Activities**”) may be considered by an applicant:
 - (a) Planning (e.g., design, technical review, mapping, ground truthing, permitting, consultation);
 - (b) Vegetation/Fuel management (e.g., complete vegetation removal in the construction of fireguards/fuel breaks including maintenance activities such as agricultural grazing); and,
 - (c) Public education (e.g., increasing awareness regarding wildfire threat and application of FireSmart principles regarding fireguards/fuel breaks in the form of public presentation, open house, local advertising, etc.).
- 1.5 FRIAA is requesting Applicants to submit a proposal for **Phase 2: Fireguard/Fuel Break Construction** under this RFP. This phase is for clearing and construction costs, based on the outcomes of the completed **Phase 1: Planning**. An updated cost estimate to complete **Phase 3: Grazing Site Preparation** is also being requested with this submission. For context, a brief description of each phase follows:
 - (a) **Phase 1: Planning** was the initial project concept and identification of community locations and budgeting (e.g., design, mapping, ground truthing, permitting and authorizations, consultation).
 - (b) **Phase 2: Fireguard/Fuel Break Construction** involves the implementation of approved plans (e.g., land clearing, timber harvest, debris disposal).
 - (c) **Phase 3: Grazing Site Preparations** applies where appropriate (e.g., grubbing/stumping, debris disposal, fencing, seeding).
- 1.6 This RFP is open by invitation to short-listed municipalities; Alberta First Nations; Métis Settlements, Co-operatives, Enterprises or Locals, and is focussed on vegetation/fuel management projects relating to the construction of fireguards/fuel breaks in the current fiscal period until March 31, 2025.

- 1.7 Proposals will be approved subject to:
- a) available CFP funds;
 - b) Wildfire Management Branch (“**WMB**”) technical fireguard plan approval;
 - c) the Applicant’s state of readiness / timeliness to begin clearing and construction in the fall 2024; and,
 - d) the relative community exposure wildfire risk rating.
- 1.8 FRIAA Field Liaison representatives are available to discuss your project details to provide independent technical insights that may help facilitate the development of a strong Proposal. Please contact the representative in the area of your proposed project, by approximate geographic area (subject to change):
- (a) Andy Gesner
andy.gesner@friaa.ab.ca
780.404.6944
Fort McMurray, Lac La Biche, Slave Lake, Whitecourt
 - (b) Rick Arthur
rick.arthur@friaa.ab.ca
403.489.2026
Edson, Rocky Mountain House, Calgary
 - (c) Wes Nimco
wes.nimco@friaa.ab.ca
780.689.9073
High Level, Peace River, Grande Prairie

2. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 Applicants are advised to pay careful attention to the information provided in this RFP. Failure to satisfy any term, condition or mandatory requirement of this RFP may result in delay or rejection of the Proposal.
- 2.2 Proposals must be clear and well-written and must concisely describe the components of the proposed project, including each of the program proposal requirements set out in subsections 2.3 and 2.4 below (collectively the “**Program Proposal Requirements**”), using the application form and template as provided by FRIAA.
- 2.3 **Application Form**
- (a) Provide a project title specific to your project location and discipline.
 - (b) Provide contact information for the Authorized Representative (name, title, phone number, email, and address) of the 1) applicant organization and the individual(s) authorized to represent the applicant and commit the applicant to the execution of a Project Grant Agreement and 2) the individual who will manage the Project.

- (c) Indicate the operational dates and the estimated amount of funding that would be required to support operations until March 31, 2025 to complete Phase 2 of the proposed project. FRIAA anticipates that subsequent Phase 2: Construction proposal intakes will be announced later in the fall of 2024 and/or early winter 2025. Further, additional funding may be available in the next fiscal year (April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026) for the completion (i.e. debris disposal by pile burning) / next phases of the project development. Applicants should indicate the full funding required to complete Phase 2, but break out the funding by fiscal year.
- (d) Indicate the anticipated duration / timeline and the estimated amount of funding required to complete Phase 3 of the proposed project (expected post April 1, 2025).
- (e) Include the appropriate attachment required below, and have an Authorized Representative sign the applicant acknowledgement set out on the application form. Applications from:
 - (i) Municipalities must be accompanied by properly executed Municipal Council Resolution;
 - (ii) First Nations must be accompanied by a properly executed Band Council Resolution; and,
 - (iii) Métis Settlements must be accompanied by a properly executed Settlement Council Resolution and applications from Co-operatives, Enterprises or Locals must be signed by the President.

2.4 Template

- (a) Describe the project overview.
- (b) Describe the adjacent community(ies) and geographic area to be covered by the project and include an overview map for the planned area(s), clearly identifying the proposed fire guard boundaries.
- (c) Provide a description of the project approach and project work plan.
 - (i) Describe the detailed approach for Phase 2 of the proposed project, including clearing, salvage wood contracts with mills, debris disposal, and proposed equipment (e.g., feller buncher, mulcher), with an overview of the project approach for Phase 3, if grazing will be used for vegetation maintenance.
 - (ii) Provide a chronological work plan and timeline for Phase 2, with additional detail provided for Phase 3, including major tasks, milestones, dependencies, start and end dates, and deliverables.
 - (iii) Describe the permits, licences and authorizations acquired under Phase 1 to undertake the proposed project. If any required permits, licences, and authorizations are still outstanding, provide the status, timeline and budget to complete these processes. Phase 2 funding may be approved prior to all permits, licences and authorizations being received by the Applicant, however, the Applicant must

demonstrate the status and expected timeline for any outstanding authorizations. Wildfire Management Branch approval for technical fireguard plan effectiveness will be required prior to Phase 2 funding approval. (**Note:** development on Crown land will likely require a Temporary Field Authorization (TFA), acquisition of a Vegetation Control Easement (VCE), consultation as directed by the Aboriginal Consultation Office (ACO), payment of Timber Damage Assessment(s) (TDA), *etc.* Include a cost allowance in your Phase 2 budget estimation for these processes.)

- (d) Describe how the community and stakeholders (including government entities in the community) will be involved in the project. Indicate how community members will be advised of and/or engaged in the proposed project. Describe the impacts on other resources or land users. Describe the communication milestones planned for the proposed project, detailing the sequence, timing, and duration of related activities.
- (e) Demonstrate the regional Wildfire Management Branch (Alberta Forestry and Parks) approval for the proposed project, regarding the technical design of the fireguard.
- (f) Demonstrate the regional Public Lands Branch (Alberta Environment and Protected Areas) approval for the proposed project regarding the feasibility of grazing livestock (if this is the planned vegetation management strategy) for the fireguard.
- (g) Outline a plan to address safety protocols and describe safe working conditions during the construction phase of this project. **COR, SECOR or equivalent safety certification and a minimum of \$10 million of liability insurance will be required for Phases 2 and 3.**
- (h) Describe the project management and processes in place to ensure that the Project is completed on time, including the measures in place for quality control (e.g., regulatory approvals, communications, data), cost control/tracking, safety, and adequate reporting to FRIAA. Identify the person(s) responsible by name or role.
- (i) Describe the anticipated Project outcomes in terms of measurable results. Additional required deliverables are outlined below. Quantify specific outcomes (e.g., number of hectares cleared for the fireguard and if applicable, what kind/how many livestock are expected to graze on-site).

(i) **PHASE 2 DELIVERABLES:**

- 1) Overview map of constructed fireguard boundary, site improvements (e.g., dugouts);
- 2) Shapefile or geodatabase of constructed fireguard (treatment area) boundary and site improvements (e.g., dugouts) in the FRIAA FireSmart data format and templates, as provided in **Appendices A, B and C.**
- 3) Detailed cost estimate and budget breakdown for Phase 3 site preparation for grazing;
- 4) Detailed timeline, milestones, dependencies and start and end dates for Phase 3; and,
- 5) Summary report including hectares cleared, volume of timber salvaged, costs to-date with supporting contractor invoices.

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- (ii) **ANTICIPATED PHASE 3 DELIVERABLES:**
- 1) Overview map of grazing area boundary, treatments (e.g., seeding), and site improvements (e.g., dugouts, cattleguards, gates, fencing);
 - 2) Shapefile or geodatabase of grazing area boundary, treatments (e.g., seeding), and site improvements (e.g., dugouts, cattleguards, gates, fencing); and,
 - 3) Summary report including hectares treated (e.g., grubbed and/or seeded), costs to-date with supporting contractor invoices.
- (j) Description of funding requested and overall budget for Phase 2;
- (i) Describe the project budget and the funding requested from FRIAA for Phase 2 Construction activities. The funding committed in Phase 2 will be reimbursed up to the maximum approved amount, inclusive of GST on third-party invoices. Proposed costs for activities must contain sufficient detail (e.g., unit costs and estimated number of units) to allow for assessment that they are transparent, competitive, and consistent with fair-market value principles. Generalized administration fees, contingency fees and “percentage markup” will not be accepted (build this into your maximum price). Demonstrate your understanding of the steps to complete the project.
- 1) Describe the process used to determine that budget costs represent market value for the activities proposed (e.g., bid tenders, market survey, etc.).
 - 2) Describe and quantify in dollars, the value of in-kind resources that will directly contribute to the activities proposed. “In-kind” can include administration, supervision, project management and quality control time, equipment such as trucks, tools, fuel, uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), training materials and resources, advertising costs and materials, financial contributions etc.
 - 3) Describe other funding sources that will contribute to the overall Project budget and the amount of those funds. Sources include financial contribution by the applicant or other stakeholders.
- (ii) Provide a cost breakdown for the anticipated work in Phase 3: Grazing Site Preparation. The budget estimate for Phase 3 should include a brief description of the work plan approach for site preparation for grazing. Note: potential project funding for Phase 3 is subject to the submission and approval of a detailed proposal, (if the Applicant is short-listed), and to funding availability.
- (iii) Projects that involve harvesting of merchantable timber or biomass may only claim incremental costs of harvesting activities. Describe how the merchantable fibre will be sold or allocated, and a clear process for determining the incremental logging costs that will be claimed as a project cost. **Revenue generated from the sale of timber or biomass must be returned to the project budget.**
- (k) Describe the local employment created in terms of financial impact to local citizens or businesses.

- (l) Propose a Progress Reporting schedule related to the work schedule and completion of project milestones.
- (m) Propose a Payment Schedule for making grant payment claims, in conjunction with the proposed progress reporting schedule.
- (n) Provide any additional information to support your Proposal.

3. PROPOSAL ADJUDICATION CRITERIA

3.1 Proposals shall be reviewed, evaluated, and recommended to the FRIAA Board of Directors (the “**Board**”) for approval based on the following criteria:

- (a) Proposals must use the application form and follow the template provided for this RFP.
- (b) Priority will be given to Proposals that support:
 - (i) enhanced public safety and improved protection of at-risk communities in the Forest Protection Area (including an assessment of the relative community exposure wildfire risk rating);
 - (ii) planned fireguard boundaries directly adjacent to communities for optimal benefits (including technical effectiveness approval from the WMB);
 - (iii) "shovel ready" projects, with approved technical plans and “nearly complete” regulatory permitting from Phase 1: Planning;
 - (iv) expedited construction projects with timelines for Phase 2 (clearing initiation by fall 2024 and completion by March 31, 2025) and Phase 3 (if planning on grazing site preparation, seeding and fencing, to be completed by March 31, 2026);
 - (v) projects with community support and acceptance, based on community ownership of past FireSmart activities;
 - (vi) cost competitive projects that are delivered efficiently;
 - (vii) projects that leverage FRIAA funding with other sources of funding, including significant in-kind support;
 - (viii) livestock grazing as a means of ongoing and longer-term vegetation management on the sites and local economic development opportunities; and,
 - (ix) local contractors and labour.
- (c) The expenses set out in the Proposal must be reasonable in all circumstances and must not exceed the fair market value of the goods and services being provided.
- (d) The applicant must be able to complete the project economically and efficiently, and in considering this criteria, the Board may take into account the following:
 - (i) The applicant’s proximity to the location of the proposed project;

- (ii) The applicant's (and contractor / consultant's) experience in performing such projects;
- (iii) Whether the applicant has, in the past, successfully completed projects funded by FRIAA (and how many are on-going, particularly if the project is aged over two years);
- (iv) The amount of leverage by way of in-kind contributions of labour, equipment or other resources by the applicant that are directly applicable to the proposed project. Note: The proposed budget must not allocate any FRIAA funds for existing staff or resources of the applicant; and,
- (v) The amount of leverage in direct funding secured by the applicant for the proposed project.
- (e) The proposed project must not be located on private land or lands under federal jurisdiction, except that the proposed project may be located on a Reserve or on Métis Settlement, Cooperative, Enterprise or Local lands.
- (f) The proposed project must not include any prospective, in-progress or completed work under the Provincial FireSmart Program or the FRIAA FireSmart Program.
- (g) The proposed project must not involve work that will have a significant adverse impact on other forest resources or the environment as a whole and the applicant must agree to carry out the proposed project in an environmentally responsible manner.
- (h) The proposed project must not be contrary to the provisions of relevant regulations or legislation or the objects of FRIAA, or FRIAA's bylaws.
- (i) The proposed project must not include any work that is, in the opinion of FRIAA, a responsibility of a timber disposition holder or constitutes a subsidy to the forest industry.

4. COMMUNITY FIREGUARD PROGRAM OUTLINE

- 4.1 The [full text](http://www.friaa.ab.ca) of the Program Outline for the CFP is available on FRIAA's website (www.friaa.ab.ca).

5. LEGAL NOTICE

- 5.1 By submitting a Proposal, you confirm that you have read, understand, and accept the information contained in this RFP and, that each of you, the applicant and all individuals and entities that collaborate or are otherwise involved in the preparation of the Proposal or the delivery of the proposed project ("**Project Partners**") agree as follows:
- (a) FRIAA may at any time withdraw, suspend, cancel, terminate, amend, or alter all or any portion of this RFP, including but not limited to the Program Proposal Requirements, the Proposal process, and the Proposal adjudication criteria.
 - (b) FRIAA reserves the unqualified right to accept or reject any or all Proposals for any reason. FRIAA is not required to accept any Proposals nor is it required to accept any Proposal recommended for funding.

- (c) The final decision with respect to the Proposals rests solely with the Board. The evaluation of the Proposals may be based on, but is not in any way limited to, the criteria set out in this RFP. The Board may consider any criteria determined by FRIAA to be relevant to FRIAA's mandate, regardless of whether such additional criteria have been disclosed to the applicant.
- (d) No conduct, act, or omission of FRIAA, or its directors, officers, consultants, project advisors, agents, servants and their respective successors and assigns (collectively the "**FRIAA Parties**") other than a written notice to the applicant in writing signed by an authorized person for FRIAA, will constitute an acceptance of a Proposal.
- (e) Proposals that do not comply with the requirements described in this RFP may be rejected in whole or in part or not considered. FRIAA reserves the unqualified right to accept or reject a non-compliant Proposal.
- (f) This RFP is an invitation for Proposals only. It is not an offer, and the submission of a Proposal does not create a contract or agreement of any kind between FRIAA and the applicant.
- (g) Acceptance of a Proposal does not create a binding contract between FRIAA and the applicant. FRIAA shall not be obligated in any manner whatsoever to any applicant until a written agreement between FRIAA and the applicant ("**Project Grant Agreement**") has been duly executed relating to an approved Proposal.
- (h) As between the parties, the Proposal and all documents and materials you submit to FRIAA in connection with the Proposal and this RFP and all intellectual property in and to the foregoing are the exclusive property of FRIAA immediately upon delivery to FRIAA. For clarity, this refers to the materials themselves, not to any technology or innovations disclosed or discussed in them. Intellectual property developed during the course of the project will be addressed through the Project Grant Agreement and will normally be owned by the applicant.
- (i) You, the applicant, and any Project Partners will keep this RFP confidential and will not use, reproduce, or distribute it, any portion of it, or any data, information, drawings, or specifications included in or provided with it except as necessary to prepare a Proposal to FRIAA in response to it or to apply for additional third-party funding for the project.
- (j) You, the applicant, and any Project Partners will not make a claim against FRIAA or the FRIAA Parties for any reason whatsoever relating to this RFP. You are undertaking the expenditures required to prepare and submit a Proposal entirely at your own risk, and you waive any right and release FRIAA and the FRIAA Parties from any demands, liability, claim or recovery for costs, expenses, or damages incurred in connection with this RFP or any Proposal prepared in response to it, whether such right or claim arises in contract, negligence or otherwise.
- (k) FRIAA takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information supplied during this RFP process by FRIAA or the FRIAA Parties.

- (l) Neither FRIAA nor any of the FRIAA Parties will have any liability whatsoever to you, the applicant, or any Project Partners, or any of them, in connection with this RFP or any Proposal prepared in response to it.
- (m) Upon acceptance of a Proposal by FRIAA, the applicant will be required to enter into a Project Grant Agreement with FRIAA, on substantially the same terms and conditions contained in the Project Grant Agreement provided during the RFP or available upon request.

6. INFORMATION SESSION

- 6.1 FRIAA will hold an Information Session by **virtual conference** to address questions that may arise with respect to this RFP on **August 20, 2024**. Applicants are highly encouraged phone in. Call-in information and the agenda for the session will be posted on the FRIAA website.

7. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

- 7.1 Proposals must be identified as follows: **FRIAA-CFP AUGUST 2024**
- 7.2 Proposals may be submitted on FRIAA's website portal at: <https://friaa.ab.ca/program-submissions/>. Only Proposals formatted in PDF or Microsoft Word will be accepted.
- 7.3 **Deadline for Proposals:** Only those Proposals received by **4:00 p.m.**, local Edmonton time, on **September 13, 2024** will be accepted for evaluation at this time. Subsequent proposal intakes are expected to be announced in due course, and are expected later in the fall of 2024 or in early winter 2025, based on available funding, for projects with later initiation and completion timelines.
- 7.4 FRIAA is not responsible for Proposals that are not received as the result of any delivery failure of any kind by any delivery service whatsoever. FRIAA is also not responsible for Proposals that are not received as the result of technological issues, including attachment size, internet, email or file transfer technology failure or any other logistical barrier which may impede electronic submission.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 FRIAA and the WMB will review submitted Proposals and recommend proposed projects (Phase 2) to the FRIAA Board for approval of funding under the CFP. Funding is limited at this time and it is expected that only high-risk communities with shovel-ready plans for fall 2024 construction kick-off will be funded in the first round of proposal intake. Subsequent Phase 2 proposal intake dates will be announced in due course.
- 8.2 Applicants will be notified of the acceptance, rejection or delay of their respective Proposals (Phase 2) or requested to provide additional clarification or information as soon as is reasonably possible. This notification is expected to occur by the end of September.